

Small Generators of Infectious Waste

PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to provide an overview of Ohio's infectious waste regulations applicable to small generators of infectious waste.

APPLICABILITY

Any business that generates infectious waste is considered an infectious waste generator and is subject to Ohio's infectious waste regulations. An infectious waste generator is classified as a small generator when less than 50 pounds of infectious waste are generated per calendar month and a large generator when 50 pounds or more of infectious waste are generated per calendar month. The scope of the infectious waste regulations includes waste segregation, packaging, storage, shipping, and treatment of infectious wastes generated or disposed of in Ohio.

DEFINITIONS

"Generator" means any person who produces infectious waste. A "person" can be governmental bodies, or a business operated by a sole proprietor, partnership, or corporation.

"Infectious agent" means a type of microorganism, helminth, or virus that causes or significantly contributes to the cause of increased morbidity or mortality of human beings.

"Zoonotic agent" means a type of microorganism, helminth, or virus that causes disease in vertebrate animals and that is transmissible to human beings and causes or significantly contributes to the cause of increased morbidity or mortality of human beings.

"Infectious waste" includes the following categories:

- Cultures and stocks of infectious agents and associated biologicals
- Laboratory wastes that were, or were likely to have been in contact with infectious agents
- Pathological wastes, including human and animal tissues, organs, and body parts
- Waste materials from the rooms of humans, or the enclosures of animals, that have been isolated because of diagnosed communicable disease
- Human and animal blood specimens and blood products, provided that the animals were or are likely to have been exposed to a zoonotic or infectious agent. "Blood products" does not include patient care waste such as bandages or disposable gowns that are lightly soiled with blood.
- Contaminated carcasses, body parts, and bedding of animals that were diagnosed with or intentionally exposed to infectious agents from zoonotic or human diseases during research, production of biologicals, or testing of pharmaceuticals
- Sharp wastes (including, but not limited to, hypodermic needles, syringes, and scalpel blades) used in the treatment of human beings or animals, or sharp wastes that have or are likely to have come in contact with infectious agents in medical, research, or industrial laboratories.
- Waste materials generated in the diagnosis, treatment, or immunization of human beings or animals, research pertaining to the immunization of human

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beings or animals, or in the production or testing of biologicals, that the public health council identifies as infectious wastes.

- Any other waste materials the generator designates as infectious wastes.

Note: Nearly all categories of infectious waste depend upon the presence or the possibility of the presence of infectious agents. The exceptions to this are blood, blood products, and cultures, which are always considered infectious waste.

COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS

Monthly generation log: Small generators are required to maintain a monthly generation log of the amount of infectious waste generated each calendar month. The monthly generation rate log must show the weight of all the infectious waste generated during each calendar month. If the infectious waste is sent to a licensed infectious waste treatment facility, the generator may use the treatment shipping papers that include the weight of all the infectious waste that is generated during that calendar month. Small generators may also use a combination of a monthly generation rate log and treatment shipping papers to document the monthly generation rate if the generator does not send all infectious wastes generated for treatment. If a small generator produces 50 pounds of infectious waste in any calendar month, they must submit an application for registration as a generator of infectious waste. Contact the Division of Solid and Infectious Waste Management at (614) 644-2621 or download the application from this website http://www.epa.state.oh.us/dsiwm/pages/iw_do_cs.html#s.

Infectious Sharps: All infectious sharps must be placed into containers specifically designed and manufactured for the management and/or disposal of sharps. The container must be labeled with the international biohazard symbol. The weight of all infectious sharps must be

obtained and recorded each month. This may be most easily done by recording the initial weight of a sharps container at the beginning of the month and then subtracting this value from the final weight at the end of the month.

Unused & Non-infectious Sharps: Sharps such as hypodermic needles, syringes, hard plastic pipets, and scalpel blades that are non-infectious or are unused, can be discarded in a cardboard box lined with a plastic bag. Used intravenous bags, bottles, and tubing that are not contaminated with blood or attached to a needle are not infectious wastes.

Untreated liquid or semi-liquid infectious waste: Infectious wastes consisting of blood, blood products, body fluids, and excreta may be disposed of into a sanitary sewer if the disposal is allowed for the waste water treatment system.

Specimen cultures and cultures of viable infectious agents: These items must be treated on the premises where they are generated or transported to a licensed infectious waste treatment facility by an infectious waste transporter registered with Ohio EPA. Cultures may be rendered noninfectious by chemical treatment using the approved chemical of 15 % vol/vol hypochlorite (household bleach) solution. The solution must be made immediately before use and all cultures must be submerged for a minimum of 20 minutes. Expired or unwanted vaccines are required to be handled in the same manner as cultures and stocks of infectious agents.

Other infectious wastes: All other categories of infectious waste must be segregated from the rest of the waste stream for quantification. All other infectious wastes can be transported and disposed of as solid waste (except for specimen cultures and cultures of infectious agents) after the amount of waste has been weighed and recorded in the monthly infectious waste generation log. In addition, small generators of infectious waste may transport

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their infectious waste to a hospital for disposal or treatment, if the small generator has staff privileges at that hospital. Please note that even though state regulations allow the disposal of untreated sharps and other infectious waste into the solid waste stream, many solid waste haulers and landfill operators do not accept this type of waste.

Infectious waste that is also a hazardous waste: Any infectious waste or infectious waste mixture that meets the definition of a hazardous waste shall be managed as a hazardous waste. For information regarding hazardous waste, contact the Division of Hazardous Waste Management at (614) 644-2917 or visit this website <http://www.epa.state.oh.us/dhwm/>.

Infectious waste that is also a radioactive waste: Any infectious waste that is also radioactive shall be managed in accordance with applicable Ohio Department of Health (<http://www.odh.state.oh.us/>) and U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (<http://www.nrc.gov/waste.html>) regulations.

Infectious waste storage: The integrity of the packaging must be maintained. There are no time limits regarding infectious waste storage, however, infectious waste must remain in a non-putrescent state. You must also maintain infectious waste in a manner that prevents it from becoming a food source or breeding ground for animals or insects. Infectious waste storage areas must be marked with a sign that states "warning: infectious waste" and/or displays the international biohazard symbol, or lock the storage area.

Transporting infectious waste to a licensed treatment facility: If a small generator chooses to send their infectious waste off-site for treatment at a licensed infectious waste treatment facility, they may use an infectious waste transporter registered with Ohio EPA.

APPLICABLE RULES

OAC: 3745-27-01 3745-27-34
3745-27-30 3745-27-35

CONTACT INFORMATION

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